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# The TALBOT PRESS PLAYS



## THE LORD MAYOR

*Edward McNulty*

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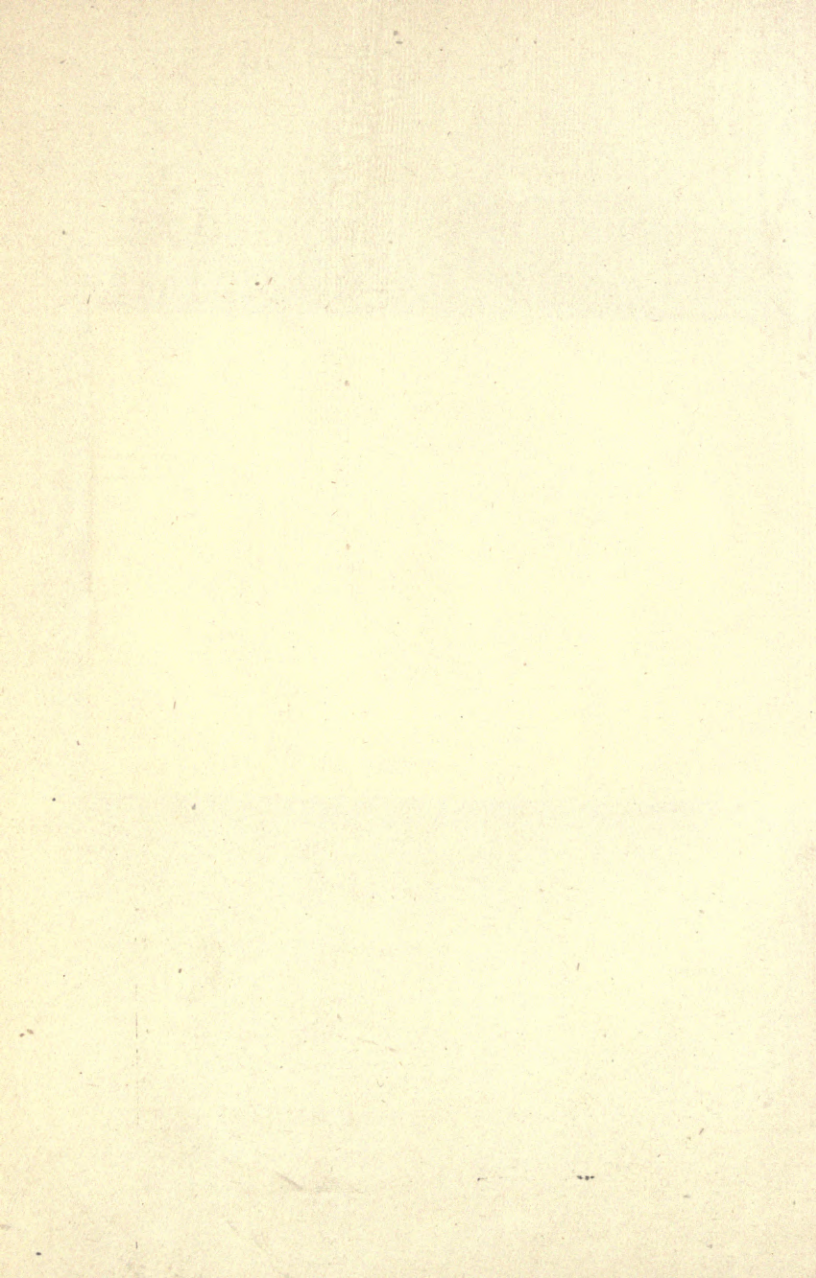
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## CHARACTERS

MR. O'BRIEN, *an Ironmonger ; afterwards*  
*Lord Mayor*

MRS. O'BRIEN, *his Wife*

MOIRA, *their Daughter*

GAFFNEY, *a Solicitor*

KELLY, *his Clerk*

CREDITORS :

SCANLAN

DOHERTY

MRS. MORAN

MAJOR BUTTERFIELD, *in the Secret Service*

MRS. MURPHY, *Charwoman*

MRS. MOLONEY, *Ditto*

MANSION HOUSE SERVANTS, CREDITORS,

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TIME—*Present day*



# THE LORD MAYOR

## ACT I

*Scene.—GAFFNEY's office. Long table centre with green baize cloth ; six chairs round same ; four chairs against back wall. Legal notices hung on wall. Doors C and L. Time, 8.30 a.m. When the curtain rises MRS. MURPHY is under the table, singing, unseen by audience. She sings, "It's a long, long way to Tipperary." Presently, still singing, she rises to view, back of table against which she bumps her head. She interrupts singing to strike table, saying, "Bad cess to you." Then resumes song in a cracked voice, particularly on the higher notes.*

*She is a short, square-set woman with masculine type of face ; self-assertive and confident ; able to hold her own. She wears an old blue apron, with white spots, tied round the waist ; an old-fashioned hat, with the wrong side to front ; her sleeves are tucked up over elbows.*

*Enter MRS. MOLONEY, her bosom friend, wearing shawl and large, battered, black straw hat, with withered artificial flowers. She is thin, dyspeptic, nervous and inclined to melancholy. She stands in doorway C, looking round timidly at MRS. MURPHY.*

MRS. MOLONEY. Are you there, Mrs. Murphy, ma'am ?

MRS. MURPHY. Is that yourself, Mrs. Moloney ? It's heartily welkim y'are, thanks be to God. And how's the body ?

MRS. MOLONEY (*slowly entering*). It's sick and tired I am of it, Mrs. Murphy. I don't care when I leave it and go to a better world. My inside's not what it ought to be. (*Coughs.*)

MRS. MURPHY (*scrubbing*). D'you tell me so?

MRS. MOLONEY. The pains and aches I suffer ud wring the heart out of a stone let alone a poor woman. But I suppose I must put up with it, since it's the will of God.

MRS. MURPHY. Ay, we must take whatever God sends, but if you'd thry a pint o' porther wud a lather of pepper on the top of it, it ud do you more good nor the hospital.

MRS. MOLONEY. It was never in the heart of me to take the money from the childher and spend it in the public-house. I cudn't do it, and that's the truth.

MRS. MURPHY. But, sure, if God seen good to take you from the childher—God help them—and you could prolong your days with a pint o' porther, I think it's what you ought to do. But I can't argufy the matter now, that ould divil of a Gaffney'll be down any moment, shoutin' and roarin' bekase there's a speck of dust somewhere or anywhere.

MRS. MOLONEY. Mr. Gaffney's the master, sure enough, and lets all the world know it.

MRS. MURPHY. Ay, he's the master of his bissiness and the master of the Corporation, and I'm thinking, Mrs. Moloney, it won't be long before he's the master of Ireland—bad cess to him.

MRS. MOLONEY. He's a terrible clever man. They do be sayin' he knows more law nor all the Judges on the Bench.

MRS. MURPHY. And more divilment than the divil himself—God forgive me. Oh, there's no stannin him. But he's not goin' to master me, all the same.

MRS. MOLONEY. You wor always able to hold your own, ma'am, good luck to you for it. And, sure, why wouldn't you? (*Coughs.*)

MRS. MURPHY. If I didn't nobody else would. If you let the Gaffneys of the world get the better of you,

they'll trample the life out of you and never look back to see if you wor hurt. They're worse nor a Murdher car.

MRS. MOLONEY. It's not everyone has the big, warm heart you have, ma'am, though I say it to your face.

MRS. MURPHY. I never knew you to say one thing to my face and another behind my back like some of my friends, without mentionin' names. But, sure, I wasn't born yestherda.

MRS. MOLONEY. I've only to look at you to know that, ma'm.

MRS. MURPHY. That's one of them sayings you can take two meanings out of.

MRS. MOLONEY. I meant no offence in the mortal world, ma'am. (*Coughs.*) And you tell me there's to be doin's here to-day?

MRS. MURPHY. That poor ould cratur, Jimmy O'Brien's, gone bankrupt.

MRS. MOLONEY. Not the ironmonger out of Liverpool Street?

MRS. MURPHY. The very man.

MRS. MOLONEY. Not much of a man.

MRS. MURPHY. There I lave you. The poorest speciment of a man from this to Ireland's Eye.

MRS. MOLONEY. And him in the Corporation!

MRS. MURPHY. His wife druv him to it. She's sick with the thought of her own importance, and she's nobody at all. It's the poor show Jimmy O'Brien med of himself in the Corporation. Never opened his mouth from the time he put his foot in it.

MRS. MOLONEY. And you tell me he's broke now?

MRS. MURPHY. Be his wife's extravagance. Sellin' ould kettles an' shovels wasn't good enough for the likes o' her. It's the real lady she wanted to be, moryah. Now she's a pauper. The creditors are to hold a meetin' to-day, and that'll be the end of him and her.

## The Lord Mayor

MRS. MOLONEY. It's yourself has all the knowledge, ma'am.

MRS. MURPHY. It's young Mr. Kelly, the clerk here, tells me everything. A decent, good lad that ud give away a fortune if he had it. He'd be at the top of the tree only he isn't a climber. All he wants is to knock about the city lookin' after the girls. S'long's he's tuppence in his pocket, to hell with the King and country. That's Kelly.

*Enter GAFFNEY C., in a bad temper. He pulls at the lappels of his coat, then looks at his watch as he enters. He is a man of forty-five, clean shaven, reddish hair ; in manner, resolute and brusque.*

GAFFNEY (to Mrs. Murphy). Are you here still with your infernal brushes and buckets? What the blazes keeps you to this hour? I've told you twenty times before not to enter this office again. If I've dismissed you once I've dismissed you fifty times, but you turn up like a bad sixpence. There's no getting rid of you. Where's Mr. Kelly?

MRS. MURPHY. You'd better ax him when you see him. You've such a nice way with you I'm sure he'd be pleased to tell you anything.

GAFFNEY. If he had your tongue he'd make a fortune selling rotten fish. Here, stir yourself. Get the place cleared up. Do you think you own it?

MRS. MURPHY. Faith, if I did, you wouldn't be long in it.

GAFFNEY. You're the brazenest old battleaxe in this city. You won't do the work you're paid for, but you can give any amount of cheek.

*Roused by these reproaches on her friend, MRS. MOLONEY advances pathetically towards GAFFNEY, her long arms out-stretched.*

MRS. MOLONEY. Oh, please, sir!

GAFFNEY (backing). What's the matter with you?



MRS. MOLONEY. Oh, sir ; oh, Mr. Gaffney, sir ; if you knew the good, kind heart she has. There's no better woman in the city.

GAFFNEY. Then the city should be burned with fire and brimstone.

MRS. MOLONEY (*gesticulating in the air*). Oh, Mr. Gaffney, sir ; oh, please, sir ; if you knew the swate kindness of her heart. I can't stan' by and hear her treated like a dog.

GAFFNEY. Treat her like a dog ? Not likely, Who the devil sent for you ? What brought you here ?

MRS. MURPHY. Her feet for the want of a taxi. Sit down, Mrs. Moloney, God help you, an' rest yourself. Don't mind him. He knows no better.

GAFFNEY. Clear out of this, the two of you, and don't come here again. Do you hear ?

MRS. MURPHY. I'd want to be mighty deaf not to hear your ugly voice.

GAFFNEY (*approaching door L. and shouting*). Kelly ! Are you there, Kelly ?

MRS. MURPHY (*derisively*). Hould that fella. (*To Mrs. Moloney.*) Did you ever hear such a wicked divil ?

MRS. MOLONEY. I think, ma'am, I'd better be goin', ma'am, if it's all the same to you. I don't like the looks of him.

MRS. MURPHY. The divil a go you'll go just to please him. Cock him up, faith. Stay here till I finish my work.

GAFFNEY (*shouting louder*). Kelly ! (*Crosses to table.*)

KELLY (*without*). Coming, sir. (*Pause.*)

*Enter Kelly. He is twenty-five years, has a racketty, jaunty air—a Jackeen—but deferential to Gaffney.*

GAFFNEY. It's time you did come. What kept you ?

KELLY. The tram lines were damaged by the strikers last night, sir, and I found considerable difficulty in securing a car.

GAFFNEY. More lies.

KELLY (*with apparent surprise*). Lies, sir? When did I ever tell you a lie?

GAFFNEY. When do you ever tell me anything else? You'd make a fortune at the Bar. But I've no time for jackeening. Clear out this pair of Bedlamites. Don't you know there's to be a meeting of Mr. O'Brien's creditors at nine o'clock? Out with them. *Exit C.*

KELLY (*with mock solemnity, oratorically*). Ladies, I am extremely sorry that this unpleasant duty has been forced upon me. There have been occasions in my chequered and adventurous career, when I have had to perform duties of the most onerous and exacting type. But, I am bound to confess, that the present occasion grieves me to the heart and stirs me to the profoundest depths of my soul. Mrs. Murphy, you must scoot. And your departure must necessarily involve that of your graceful and gifted friend. (*Bowing to Mrs. MOLONEY.*)

*Exeunt Mrs. MURPHY and Mrs. MOLONEY.*

*Enter door L., Mrs. O'BRIEN, Mr. O'BRIEN and MOIRA.*

KELLY *crosses to meet Mrs. O'BRIEN. She is of slight figure, juvenile in manner; twenty years younger than her husband; she is dressed in black and has a small black-edged white handkerchief in her hand.*

MR. O'BRIEN *is a small, weak man with thin, white hair and beard: depressed and submissive.*

MOIRA *is pretty; neatly and simply dressed; at present sad, but capable of great enthusiasm. She places her father gently in chair at back and stands protectingly beside him.*

MR. O'BRIEN *takes off his hat and slowly wipes his brow.*

MRS. O'BRIEN. How d'you do, Mr. Kelly? I never thought I would see you under such dreadful circum-

stances. To have been reared as I have been, and educated at one of the best schools—and to come to this. (*Puts handkerchief to her eyes.*)

KELLY (*with air of deepest sympathy*). It is, indeed, very sad, Mrs. O'Brien. I may go further and say it is tragic. But, may I be permitted to remind you, in the words of the poet, that there's a silver cloud to every lining—excuse me, I mean the other way about.

MRS. O'BRIEN. I know you mean well. I am very thankful to you for your sympathy, Mr. Kelly. But my husband can never succeed at anything. He hasn't got it in him. Look at him. You can see for yourself he's a perfect wreck. I thought that the fact of marrying a person in a higher social position would have nerved him to ambition. But, it serves me right. Mother and father were both against my marrying into trade. I might have married a professional man.

KELLY. You don't tell me so, Mrs. O'Brien?

MRS. O'BRIEN. A veterinary surgeon, Mr. Macnamara. I refused him and he killed himself.

KELLY. Do you tell me so?

MRS. O'BRIEN. He drank himself to death.

KELLY. Poor fellow.

MRS. O'BRIEN. But, why regret the past?

MOIRA *comes down front.*

MOIRA. Mother, you must be tired. Won't you sit down?

MRS. O'BRIEN (*to KELLY*). This is my daughter, Moira. Moira, this is Mr. Kelly, who has been so good to me with his advice. (*Retires up.*)

MOIRA. Mother has often spoken of you, Mr. Kelly, and we are much obliged to you for your kindness and advice.

KELLY (*impressed by MOIRA*). Unfortunately, Miss O'Brien, they are the only riches I possess. Otherwise there's many an unhappy family I'd like to relieve.

MOIRA. I'm sure of that. . . . Well, we're going to Canada.

KELLY. Oh, don't say that.

MOIRA. Why not?

KELLY. Well—I—it's rather a long way off, isn't it?

MOIRA. Only a fortnight or so. We're thinking of going to Winnipeg, where mother has some friends—in fact, cousins. We're sure to get on all right there. I can write shorthand. (*With enthusiasm.*) Seventy words a minute. Can you?

KELLY. Well, I can write a kind of a sort of shorthand, but when I've done it I never know whether its shorthand or Ogham.

MOIRA. What's Ogham?

KELLY. Ogham's the shorthand the ancient Irish stenographers used to write. They did it a with hammer and chisel on chunks of rock; about ten words a month, I should say. Not up to modern speed, is it?

MOIRA. There wasn't much competition then. (*With enthusiasm.*) I can do typing at forty words a minute. I have certificates for both shorthand and typing.

KELLY. It seems such a pity.

MOIRA. A pity that I have certificates?

KELLY. Oh, not that. But, that you should have to go and slave in an office.

MOIRA. But I like it. And nowadays one must do something. I don't care for housework. I have been father's book-keeper ever since I left school. Of course there weren't many books to keep, and I never got any salary. Poor Dad couldn't afford it.

KELLY. It's a dreadful pity he's reduced to this.

MOIRA. Yes, isn't it? Poor old Dad. He feels it so terribly, Mr. Kelly.

KELLY. Yes, pulling you down like this.

MOIRA. He's not pulling me down. I've never known anything but struggle. It's so hard to live.



But it's not Daddy's fault. Plenty of people fail at business, don't they, without being to blame?

KELLY. Oh, I'm not blaming him. Quite the reverse. Success is mostly a matter of luck. Here's Mr. Gaffney. I'm sure he'll do all he can.

MOIRA *crosses to* MRS. O'BRIEN.

*Enter GAFFNEY with papers. He, at once, brusquely accosts* MR. O'BRIEN, *who stands meekly up.*

GAFFNEY. Well, O'Brien, this is a nice hole you've got yourself into.

MR. O'BRIEN. Ay, ay.

GAFFNEY (*placing papers on table*). What I can't understand is this—what in the name of commonsense persuaded you to go into the Corporation? Look at the expense of the thing. What did you expect to get out of it? You're not related to a contractor, are you?

MR. O'BRIEN. No. My wife wished me to go and I went. That's all.

GAFFNEY (*seating himself at head of table, continues to talk over at* O'BRIEN, *who stands submissively, hat in hand*). I'm hanged if you're not the greatest fool I know. Because your wife wanted to brag that her husband was in the Corporation, you go to the expense of an election and all the rest of it, and wreck your business. Ay, wrecked hopelessly. I can do nothing for you.

MR. O'BRIEN. Aye, it's all over. I'm done. I'm finished.

MRS. O'BRIEN (*approaching* GAFFNEY). Why shouldn't he go into the Corporation, Mr. Gaffney, if I wished? I was brought up to expect a life of ease and refinement and I thought I married a man of ambition.

GAFFNEY. Ambition be hanged. It was your own ambition you were thinking about. You've helped to ruin your husband. I hope you're satisfied now.

MOIRA *comes forward indignantly.*

MOIRA (*to* GAFFNEY). You must not speak to my mother and father like that. I won't allow you.

GAFFNEY turns angrily: but at the sight of MOIRA, he rises slowly: his eyes fixed on her. He is instantly smitten by her charm, and his manner softens at once.

GAFFNEY. Pardon me—Miss O'Brien, I presume?

MOIRA. I am Moira O'Brien. You ought to be ashamed of yourself, Mr. Gaffney. Father and mother are crushed enough without having you using such cruel language to them.

GAFFNEY (*remorsefully*). I am sorry, Miss O'Brien. I didn't know you were listening. But, I don't profess to be extra polished when dealing with business affairs. I was merely expressing my opinion, that your father should not have gone into the Corporation with insufficient means.

MOIRA. But why should he not, if he wished to?

GAFFNEY. Certainly. Quite right. Why shouldn't he, if he wished to? I have no objection.

MOIRA. It is the duty of every citizen who desires to benefit his city to take an interest in the way it is managed, I should think.

GAFFNEY. Perfectly true. I quite agree with that.

MOIRA. Father went in from a high sense of duty. Perhaps he is not as talkative as most of the members, but he did a lot of good work, he tells me, in a quiet way.

GAFFNEY. I am quite sure of that, Miss O'Brien. In fact, I know he did. He was most helpful on committees. Of course, as you say, he does not profess to have oratorical powers. But then its not always the great talkers that make the best workers.

MOIRA. No, and that is why I can't bear to hear you abusing my poor old dad.

GAFFNEY. I apologise most heartily. (*Turning politely to Mrs. and Mr. O'Brien.*) Mr. O'Brien, will you come into my private office and rest there until those wretched creditors arrive? Can I have the pleasure of your

company, Mrs. O'Brien? Miss O'Brien, will you kindly come? We shall have a glass of wine and biscuits. (*The O'Briens exeunt C., Gaffney bowing them out. He then turns abruptly to Kelly.*) Kelly.

KELLY. Yes, sir.

GAFFNEY. What the blazes are you doing?

KELLY. Nothing, sir.

GAFFNEY. And do I pay you for that? Can't you find something better to do than staring at these unfortunate people? Attend to anyone that comes. Get all the papers concerning Mr. O'Brien's affairs and the books. Put the chairs right.

KELLY. Yes, sir. Certainly, sir. *Exit GAFFNEY C.*

*Enter two Creditors, MR. SCANLAN and MR. DOHERTY.*

SCANLAN. Hullo, Kelly.

KELLY. Good-morning, Mr. Scanlan.

SCANLAN. Where's the boss?

KELLY. He has retired *pro tem.*

SCANLAN. I hope he won't be long. I'm very busy. Has old O'Brien turned up yet?

KELLY. Mr. O'Brien has arrived.

SCANLAN. What's the matter with you to-day, Kelly? You've got your society manners on. Is Miss O'Brien here?

KELLY. Miss O'Brien has also arrived.

SCANLAN. With the latest Paris fashions—what? You speak like a Society paper. But I understand. Miss O'Brien is here. Nothing like a nice girl to put a man on his best behaviour. If you were married now, Kelly, to a real nice girl, you'd be very respectable.

KELLY. And get into the Corporation?

SCANLAN. No. Keep out of it. I never knew how many relatives I had till I got into the Corporation, and then, faith, there was no end to the Scanlan family tree. And every branch wanted a job.

KELLY (*with pretended horror*). You didn't say "job," Mr. Scanlan?

SCANLAN. What do you think a man gets into the Corporation for? For fun? Go home and go to bed! If people send us to the Corporation without paying us for loss of time, we must pay ourselves somehow. What do you say, Doherty?

DOHERTY. I say ditto to that.

SCANLAN. No man works for nothing. Members of Parliament get paid. Why not members of the Corporation? What do you say, Doherty?

DOHERTY. I say ditto to that.

SCANLAN. Doherty knows. He's been in the Corporation with me for fifteen years, off and on.

KELLY. A little more off than on, I should say.

SCANLAN. The public expect us to do their work for nothing, and then they get virtuously indignant about jobbery. What else do they expect? What do you say, Doherty?

DOHERTY. I say ditto to that.

SCANLAN. Doherty knows what he's talking about. He's been there and knows the ropes. What do you say, Doherty?

DOHERTY. Ditto.

SCANLAN. There's no man better able than Doherty to tell you about what the inner circle of the Corporation is like. Ay, Doherty?

DOHERTY. Wheels within wheels.

SCANLAN. And it's not always the man with the gift of the gab gets on best. That's all right in politics; but in civic work it's your quiet, backstairs' artist that works the strings; but poor O'Brien was no good either for the limelight or the dark corners.

DOHERTY. What brought him into the Corporation? It's in the nursery he ought to be; or the river.

SCANLAN. Anyhow, I'm out for my pound of flesh.



I'll take nothing less than fifteen shillings in the pound.

DOHERTY. There's not much chance of that. He's been going down hill for years. If we get twelve-and-sixpence it's the most.

SCANLAN. By the Lord Harry, I'll take nothing less than fifteen if I was to sell him up, lock, stock, and barrel.

KELLY. Live and let live, Mr. Scanlan.

*(Crosses to table.)*

SCANLAN. Ay, that's what all the good-for-nothings say; and what they mean is, that they're to live on the people that work hard—I know that sort of thing. A man'll go down hill, hand over hand, no matter what you say to him or what you do to check him, and, then, when he's flattened out, "Oh, live and let live, Mr. Scanlan. Don't be too hard on a man that's down." My hard earned money's to be lost for a bit of sentiment? Not if I know it.

DOHERTY. Well, I'd be glad to get twelve-and-six in the pound, though I won't say I'd be contented.

*Enter MRS. MORAN and five men creditors. They talk in groups. KELLY arranges papers on table and chairs.*

MRS. MORAN *(to KELLY)*. Is Mr. Gaffney in? I don't want to be kept waiting.

KELLY. I'll see, Mrs. Moran. I'll tell him you're all here.

*Exit KELLY C.*

MRS. MORAN. Well, Mr. Scanlan, what are we going to get out of this business?

SCANLAN. What you're going to get, Mrs. Moran, is one thing. Mr. Gaffney will tell us that. But what I want is fifteen shillings in the pound.

MRS. MORAN. Little enough, I'm sure. It's too bad on people that are not too well off.

DOHERTY. I'm afraid we won't get so much, Mrs.

MORAN. His expenses have been heavy, and he has a wife and daughter.

MRS. MORAN. Oh, everybody knows his wife—nothing too good for her—a stuck-up, empty-headed creature. I hope she's satisfied now. Nothing would do her but her husband must go into the Corporation. I don't pity her a bit. People like that always find their level. She's found her's now. I'm like Mr. Scanlan. I'll hold out for fifteen shillings in the pound.

*Enter GAFFNEY C, followed by MRS. and MR. O'BRIEN, MOIRA and KELLY.*

GAFFNEY. Morning, Mrs. Moran and gentlemen. We'll get to business at once. (*Creditors seat themselves round table. The O'BRIENS sit at back. GAFFNEY brings KELLY down front.*) I want you to write out that speech at once.

KELLY. Very good, sir.

GAFFNEY. Put all the top-gallery catches into it. You'll get them out of the newspapers, or political speeches, if you don't recollect. You know what I mean?

KELLY. Wave the Green Flag—Sunburst—Ireland will yet be free—I think I know, sir.

GAFFNEY. That's just it. Hot and strong. Be sarcastic about the King's visit. Don't forget that. That's the main point. Lash out.

KELLY. I think I'll manage it, sir.

GAFFNEY. Then do it without delay. (*Exit KELLY L. GAFFNEY takes seat at head of table.*) Now, Mrs. Moran and gentlemen, I know you are all busy as I am myself, and I won't waste your time. I'll come to the point right away. I've gone into Mr. O'Brien's accounts and nothing could be worse. The very most he will be able to pay is two shillings in the pound. (*All rise indignantly.*) Sit down, please. This is not a prayer-meeting. You don't suppose if there was another

sixpence to be got out of it, I wouldn't get it, do you?

MRS. MORAN. But, Mr. Gaffney—two shillings in the pound is nothing short of an insult. Surely there are some sticks of furniture and shop-fittings, I presume?

MRS. O'BRIEN *sobs loudly at this thrust.*

GAFFNEY (to MRS. MORAN). I didn't think you'd do that, Mrs. Moran. There's a limit to everything.

SCANLAN. But you know, we've given Mr. O'Brien every chance. I don't think any man in a small way of business was ever treated so decently by his creditors. As for me, I'll make him a present of the two shillings. I wouldn't be bothered with it.

DOHERTY. I say ditto to that.

THE OTHERS. Rotten. Two shillings in the pound!

GAFFNEY (*rising impressively*). Well, then, Mrs. Moran and gentlemen, I have a proposition to lay before you which will not only save our friend Mr. O'Brien from bankruptcy, but will ensure every one of his creditors being paid in full with compound interest. (*All look astonished.*) You know me, and you know that whenever I put my hand to the plough I never look back. Well, my proposition is, that Mr. O'Brien becomes Lord Mayor. (*Pause. Incredible looks and some sarcastic laughter.*) Yes, I thought that would rather astonish you. But I was never more serious in my life. You know that Tom Lanigan is in the running for the Mayoralty and that he's sitting on the fence with reference to the King's visit. But, stop a minute. I won't show my hand yet a bit. I'm going to make Mr. O'Brien Lord Mayor, and guarantee that he'll pay you twenty shillings in the pound.

SCANLAN. My dear Gaffney, you're talking through your hat. You're in the Corporation, so am I, so's Mr. Doherty here —

GAFFNEY. Right. That's three votes.

MRS. MORAN. Mr. O'Brien has no qualifications for a Lord Mayor.

GAFFNEY. Isn't he up to his eyes in debt? Go on, Mr. Scanlan.

SCANLAN. You know as well as I, that Mr. O'Brien—now, I know he's listening, and I beg his pardon for telling the truth—but I'm bound to talk truth in this matter at all costs—and you know, and I know, and Mr. Doherty knows, and every man, woman and child knows, that Mr. O'Brien has never opened his mouth in the Corporation; and, as far as city affairs are concerned, he doesn't seem to have two ideas in his head.

GAFFNEY. That shows all you know about him; and I thought, Mr. Scanlan, you had keener insight. Because a man is not always gabbing, you think there is nothing in him. That's the worst of this country. They'd rather have a megaphone than a man. Now, let me tell you, there's no man in this room knows Mr. O'Brien better than I; and, I have no hesitation in saying, that, beneath a mild and inoffensive manner he hides one of the keenest intellects I have ever met.

MR. O'BRIEN (*rising excitedly*). Mr. Gaffney, I want to say —

GAFFNEY (*sternly*). Sit down, O'Brien.

MR. O'BRIEN (*feebly*). But, really, Mr. Gaffney —

GAFFNEY (*more sternly*). Hold your tongue, sir. Sit down. (MR. O'BRIEN *sits down*.) I have consulted him in private on public affairs many times, and I found his advice the best that could be given. Never take a book by the cover. Mr. O'Brien, in my opinion, is the strong, silent man of the Corporation, and you'll all find that out before you're many days older.

DOHERTY. This seems to me a kind of dream, this—Jimmy O'Brien, Lord Mayor—I can't get up to it. Maybe God made me too small. But, I can't reach it. It's a vision.



GAFFNEY. Did you ever know me to dream, Doherty? Do you take me for a poet? Did I ever peg out anything yet I didn't carry through? Tell me that.

DOHERTY. There's no man that knows you, won't admit you've about the ablest head on your shoulders that has been grown in Ireland this generation. I'll abide by what you say. Anyhow, it's a great promise, and worth watching.

GAFFNEY. I have three votes for Mr. O'Brien already. To-morrow I'll have thirty.

SCANLAN. Who might the three be?

GAFFNEY. Myself, you and Doherty.

SCANLAN. I gave no promise.

DOHERTY. Nor I. But I'm open to conviction.

GAFFNEY. I bag the two of you right away. When you vote for O'Brien you vote for twenty shillings in the pound.

SCANLAN. Ay, that's a fairly powerful argument.

MRS. MORAN (*rising*). Mr. Gaffney, if you have nothing better to do than to make fools of people, I have. I've got my work to do, and I can't waste time here listening to nonsense.

GAFFNEY. Now, now, Mrs. Moran, don't lose your temper.

MRS. MORAN. I'm neither an ironmonger or a society-monger. I'm a plain, honest tradeswoman, and, thank God, I can pay twenty shillings in the pound any day. I'm not above my station. Trade is good enough for me. But I've to work hard and mind my business. I don't gad about looking for gossip about people in high society. I don't want to keep out of the poorhouse by getting into the Mansion House.

GAFFNEY. Now, Mrs. Moran, I have always found you a clever, sensible woman. Sit down and listen to reason.

MRS. MORAN. I'm always ready to listen to reason, but I'm not going to listen to fairy tales. It's hard on

an honest tradeswoman, that, when she trusts a man like Mr. Jimmy O'Brien there, she has to lose her hard-earned money. But I'm not going to put up with it. I'll stand no dishonesty or underhand treatment. I'll have my decent money back or know the reason why. (*Exit Mrs. MORAN.*)

GAFFNEY. Well, it's hard to reason with a woman when her feelings get the better of her. But I'll have a quiet talk with her later on, and I know she'll come round to my point of view. Well, gentlemen, you will get a man who won't shilly-shally about the King's visit. I know Mr. O'Brien's mind on that subject. He'll be the most popular Lord Mayor we've had for twenty years, and I wouldn't be surprised if his salary was raised an extra thousand. And now, gentlemen, I thank you for your attendance, and for the kind manner in which you received my proposal. Your affairs are safe in my hands, and I wish you good-day.

*The meeting breaks up. Two or three shake hands with GAFFNEY as they pass. Others converse as they exeunt. Enter KELLY, who gives GAFFNEY MS., which the latter glances over, nodding approvingly. The O'BRIENS come down front.*

MR. O'BRIEN (*to GAFFNEY*). Why didn't you get them to take the two shillings?

GAFFNEY. You heard what I said. You must abide by that.

MR. O'BRIEN. I'll never be Lord Mayor. It's not in me. I haven't got it in me. I can't put two words together. I'm no use at that sort of thing. It's come on me like a thunderbolt. They must take the two shillings and be done with it.

MRS. O'BRIEN. Oh, Mr. Gaffney, how can we thank you? You are so wonderful, so clever. I had no idea what you were going to say. Now, everything is so clear. It is amazing.

GAFFNEY. Everything I have promised I'll carry through.

MR. O'BRIEN. I'll never be able for it, never. I'm not a bit of use at talking.

GAFFNEY. Listen to me, O'Brien. I've never yet started anything I didn't finish. I've mapped this thing out to the finish. You'll be the strong, silent man of the Corporation. You'll make one speech. That's all. But that'll clinch everything.

MOIRA. But, Mr. Gaffney, father can't really make a speech. Indeed, he has no gifts that way. Now, if it was mother —

MRS. O'BRIEN (*indignantly*). Moira, what do you mean?

MOIRA. Nothing, mother, except that you are more—fluent than dad.

GAFFNEY. Miss O'Brien, I am aware of your father's limitations; but he will not have to compose a speech. He will merely have to speak it. And if you will kindly teach him, I'm sure he will learn quickly.

MOIRA. But what speech, Mr. Gaffney? I don't understand.

GAFFNEY. The speech that I hold here in my hand—short and to the point. Allow me to explain. Mr. Lanigan, the first favourite for the Mayoral chair, is a wobbler. He's inclined to receive the King with full civic honours, when his Majesty visits this city next April. Now, public sentiment, as you know, is dead against it.

MOIRA. If I were Lord Mayor I would not receive the English King. I'm a rebel through and through.

MRS. O'BRIEN (*shocked*). Oh, Moira. And before Mr. Gaffney, too.

GAFFNEY. I admire her for it, Mrs. O'Brien. She is a young lady of spirit, of patriotic enthusiasm. I wish there were more like her. Well now, listen—I shall have Mr. O'Brien nominated without delay. I shall

arrange matters beforehand so that he will have a majority of votes. I hold the Corporation in the hollow of my hand. And this is the speech that will carry him to the Mansion House.

MOIRA. Oh, Mr. Gaffney, do read it; do read it, please.

MR. O'BRIEN. I'd never do it; never.

MOIRA. Yes, you will, dad. I'll make you do it. Now, Mr. Gaffney. Mother, father, Mr. Kelly, listen.

GAFFNEY (*clears his throat, unfolds MS. and reads*):—  
“I rise for the first time in this city council to speak the words that are burning in my heart. The speeches to which I have just listened are a disgrace to Irish public life. They are the offspring of flunkeyism, fathered by time-servers and shoneens. The British Sovereign is to visit this great city to receive the homage of his Irish slaves. He'll receive no homage from me. I'm no English-Irishman. I'm an Irishman, pure and simple; and I stand here to-day to advocate the spirit of nationality, the spirit of Irish independence. I stand here to-day to hurl defiance in the face of the hereditary enemy of our race. I stand here to-day to vindicate the manhood of Ireland, to advocate the unfettered independence of my native land. I am no time-server, no huckster with the sacred feelings of my fellow-countrymen. The Englishman may come here and welcome, like any other tourist, but I'll bow no knee to him. I'll be no traitor to the sacred cause of Irish freedom, for which my forefathers laid down their heroic lives. To me the green flag of Ireland is the semblance of liberty. I shall never be a traitor to it. I shall live and die beneath its holy folds. And, I say now, as I shall say, please God, to my dying day, 'Down with the English connexion and God save Ireland.'”

MOIRA (*clapping hands*). Bravo, bravo. Oh, that is lendid; that is glorious. I never heard anything so



grand. It makes my heart thump and thump. Father, mother, isn't it beautiful? Mr. Kelly, isn't it splendid? Oh, if I was only a man I'd be a Fenian.

MRS. O'BRIEN. Mr. Gaffney, it is magnificent. You are so clever.

MR. O'BRIEN. I'd never be able to do it.

MOIRA. You will, dad, you must. I'll teach it to you. I'll make you learn it. Think how much depends on it. Not only our future, but the future of dear old Ireland.

GAFFNEY. This speech will be printed, after it is spoken, in every paper the length and breadth of the land; and I shall see that there will be all the proper kind of articles in the Nationalist Press. You can rely on me for that and more. I know how to inspire them. This speech, Miss O'Brien, will make your father Lord Mayor.

MOIRA (*enthusiastically*). Oh, Mr. Gaffney, how can we ever repay you?

GAFFNEY (*placing a hand on her shoulder; mysteriously*). I shall tell you how, by and by.

*She looks startled.*

CURTAIN

## ACT II

*Scene.—Upper room front of Mansion House. Enter MRS. MURPHY and MRS. MOLONEY from L. and R., meeting. They carry buckets and cloths.*

MRS. MURPHY. An' is that where y'are, Mrs. Moloney, jool? God love you, I thought I'd never set eyes on you agen.

MRS. MOLONEY. It's glad I am to see you. But what's the matter with you, ma'am? I hope your heart's not wake?

MRS. MURPHY. And when had I a heart? But I never thought I'd live to see this day—the Lord Mayor's procession, moryah. Did you ever think you'd live to see the day that ould Jimmy O'Brien, that sold ould tin pots up in Liverpool Street ud be Lord Mayor?

MRS. MOLONEY. Sure, it's Mr. Gaffney done it, right enough.

MRS. MURPHY. He did, bad cess to him. But sure I ought to be glad, and you, too, honey, jool; though no thanks to him. It was that dacent lad, Mr. Kelly, got us this job in the Mansion House, God bless him for it. A real dacent, good sport he is, right enough.

MRS. MOLONEY. He's all that, and I fale a world better since I kem. Me inside's getting stronger every day.

MRS. MURPHY. Thank God for that. You'll be able to hould a pint. But it's champagne and the best of John Jameson that'll be flowin' here to-day. To think that that upstart, Mrs. O'Brien, ud be Lady Mayoress. The Lord protect us, what next? Mebbe I'll have a chance some day. But I don't think. My husband's a dacent, honest workman, that's not a bankrupt. The way to get on is to get into debt that you can't get out

of. It's little the likes of us ud be allowed to owe. It's a great thing to be mixed up with politics.

MRS. MOLONEY. They do be sayin', ma'm, that the Lady Mayoress was nothin' but a shop girl.

MRS. MURPHY. Don't I remember her well. Many's the time I've seen her behind the counter. She was in Madam Celestine's, the feeshionable hat expert, glad to earn five bob a week. That's where she got her grand notions.

MRS. MOLONEY. But what's the good of a Lord Mayor, anyhow?

MRS. MURPHY. Oh, there I lave you. Wor you ever at a meetin' of the Corporation?

MRS. MOLONEY. I'd look well wastin' my time.

MRS. MURPHY. It's like this. (*Sits herself.*) I'm the Lord Mayor. Councillor Maconchy jumps up and says, says he, "Councillor O'Toole's a damned fool." Councillor O'Toole jumps up and says, says he, "Councillor Maconchy's a bloody fool." "Ordher, ordher," says the Lord Mayor, like that. Sure, I saw it all with my own eyes. "Ordher, ordher."

MRS. MOLONEY. Is that all the Lord Mayor has to do?

MRS. MURPHY. The divil much more. An ould second-hand gramophone ud do it better and cost less. It could be wound up to shout "Ordher, ordher," every twenty minutes.

MRS. MOLONEY. Every five minutes, ma'am.

*Distant cheers and band.*

MRS. MURPHY. True for you. But whisht. Do you hear the band and the people cheering? (*Music in distance.*) Hould that fella. Huroo there, me hearty. (*Sings and dances.*)

*Enter MRS. O'BRIEN as Lady Mayoress beautifully dressed. She gives a start of disgust at sight of charwomen.*

MRS. MOLONEY curtsys. *Mutual stare.*

MRS. O'BRIEN. Dear me, what is this? What is this? What are you women doing here?

MRS. MURPHY. Cleanin' up the Mansion House. It's got a bit dirty of late.

MRS. O'BRIEN. You shouldn't be here. Get away at once. It's ridiculous.

MRS. MURPHY. I was only havin' a word here wud my friend Mrs. Moloney, (MRS. MOLONEY *curtsys again*) about the quare changes that take place in some people's lives.

MRS. O'BRIEN. What right have you to be discussing the affairs of your superiors? Get away at once.

MRS. MOLONEY. Certainly, your ladyship. We're sorry, your ladyship, for intrudin' on your ladyship.

MRS. MURPHY. How does my hat look, Mrs. Moloney?

MRS. MOLONEY. Batthered.

MRS. MURPHY. Think o' that now. I remember the time I bought it in Madam Celestine's for a couple of guineas. How times have changed, moryah.

MRS. O'BRIEN. Why do you loiter? His lordship may return now at any moment.

MRS. MURPHY. Come, Mrs. Moloney, jool. We'd better not intrude on the quality. Good afternoon, your leedyship. (*Mock curtesy. Cheers and band nearer.*)

*Exeunt* MRS. MURPHY and MRS. MOLONEY.

*Enter* MOIRA. MRS. O'BRIEN *crosses to window.*

MOIRA. Oh, mother, how splendid you look. Dad will soon be back. Do you hear the people shouting? Isn't it all like a wonderful dream? Think of dad's glorious speech in the City Hall. Wasn't it fine? And he did it so well.

MRS. O'BRIEN. Thanks to you, dear. You coached him up wonderfully.

MOIRA. Oh, dad has more in him than people think, mother. Now, he has got the luncheon speech off quite



pat. "My lords and gentlemen, I lift my glass to the glorious antecedents of this noble house. I drink to the memory of my great predecessors, who upheld the flag of liberty within these historic walls —" It's fine. Mr. Gaffney is very clever at writing these speeches. Isn't he, mother?

MRS. O'BRIEN. He is all that, dear. And he's a very rich man, too. He's very fond of you.

MOIRA. Oh, mother. Don't talk like that. I love the speeches he writes for father; but his manner is simply abominable. (*Sits down.*) I can't stand him.

MRS. O'BRIEN. You'll get used to him in time.

MOIRA. How do you mean, mother?

MRS. O'BRIEN. Well, dear, I think he means to propose for you very soon. He's head and ears in love with you.

MOIRA. Mother, how you go on. I wish you wouldn't talk like that. I'll never be Mrs. Gaffney—not for worlds. Dad's secretary, Mr. Kelly's very nice, isn't he?

MRS. O'BRIEN. Good gracious, Moira. Your father's secretary, Mr. Kelly, who was Mr. Gaffney's clerk! What are you thinking about?

MOIRA. Oh, I merely mentioned him as a pleasing contrast to Mr. Gaffney. That's all.

MRS. O'BRIEN. I hope that's all, indeed. You owe something now to our present position, and, as it won't last for ever, you'd better make hay while the sun shines. I expect you to make a very good match, Moira. Mr. Gaffney is very rich.

MOIRA. Mr. Gaffney again, mother. Please don't.

MRS. O'BRIEN. He is very fond of you.

MOIRA. Mother, do you know who's downstairs? I saw him just as I came up. That man who has been haunting you ever since father became Lord Mayor—the Honourable Major Butterfield—you know?

MRS. O'BRIEN (*excitedly*). Oh, indeed. Such a delightful man.

MOIRA. But, mother, what does he want? He comes from the Castle or the Viceregal Lodge, doesn't he?

MRS. O'BRIEN. He's aide-de-camp to the Lord Lieutenant.

MOIRA (*alarmed*). Mother!

MRS. O'BRIEN. What is it, Moira?

MOIRA. Mother, I dread him. I am afraid there is something behind this. I don't like this man Butterfield's looks. I do hope, mother, you will do nothing that will make dad go back on his promise not to receive the King.

MRS. O'BRIEN. Moira, you forget (*crosses to fire*), that you are talking to the Lady Mayoress. I shall do nothing that is not for your advantage and my own.

MOIRA. Oh, mother, do be careful.

*Enter a LACKEY with a salver and visiting card.*

MRS. O'BRIEN *reads card*.

MRS. O'BRIEN (*to LACKEY*). Show him up. (*LACKEY bows and exits.*)

MOIRA. Mother, who is it?

MRS. O'BRIEN. The gentleman we were just speaking about—The Honourable Major Butterfield. Is my hair all right, dear?

MOIRA. May I stay, mother?

MRS. O'BRIEN. Well—no—I think not, dear. He can't stay many moments. The procession is returning.

MOIRA. Oh, mother, do be careful. These English officials are so treacherous. (*Exit.*)

SERVANT *announces* MAJOR BUTTERFIELD *who enters*  
*L. He is a man of thirty-five, dark hair and eyebrows.*  
*Military; polished manner.*

BUTTERFIELD. Ah, my lady, this is indeed a pleasure. I trust you are quite well? (*MRS. O'BRIEN gives him her hand. HE stoops and kisses it.*)

MRS. O'BRIEN. I am very well, thank you, Meejor Butterfield, and I hope I see you the same. Won't you sit down, Meejor?

BUTTERFIELD. If I were not, the sight of you would restore me.

MRS. O'BRIEN. Oh, you military men know how to flatter.

BUTTERFIELD. No, madam, I do not flatter, but I think it is such a pity, such an awful tragedy, that you can only wear this title in a temporary way—a title that should belong to you by birth—one that nature intended you to wear for ever. Now, if your husband would only mingle a grain of common sense with his politics, you would be “your ladyship” always, as you deserve to be.

MRS. O'BRIEN. How so, Meejer? You hinted at something like this before. But, I am afraid, I am rather dull.

BUTTERFIELD. Your ladyship will permit me to explain. It is rather awkward just at this juncture that your husband should, in his capacity as Lord Mayor, refuse to receive his Majesty.

MRS. O'BRIEN (*falteringly*). But—he has promised not to.

BUTTERFIELD. What are promises—in politics? But see what he loses. I am not speaking now officially. I merely come to you in a friendly way from His Excellency. If your husband would receive His Majesty, do you know what would happen?

MRS. O'BRIEN. The Mansion House windows would be broken.

BUTTERFIELD. Surely, that is a slight matter! Listen, my lady. If your husband consents to receive the King, he will be made a Baronet.

MRS. O'BRIEN (*gasping*). Good gracious, is it possible?

BUTTERFIELD. It is not only possible; it is an absolute

certainly. Then, instead of being "my lady" for two years or so, you become by right, as the wife of a baronet, "my lady" for ever.

MRS. O'BRIEN. I must really speak to Jimmy about this. I mean, my husband.

BUTTERFIELD. But, of course, diplomatically.

MRS. O'BRIEN. With Mr. Gaffney bossing him, it will be rather difficult.

BUTTERFIELD. He can snap his fingers at Mr. Gaffney—whoever he is—he can snap his fingers at the whole world. I feel confident, that I can safely place this matter in your ladyship's hands. But, remember, there is no time to be lost.

MRS. O'BRIEN. I shall speak to him to-night, if he's sober enough. It is very kind of you, Meejor.

BUTTERFIELD. There is nothing in this world I would not do for so charming and beautiful a woman.

*Cheers without.*

MRS. O'BRIEN. Oh, more Blarney-stone. But, listen—they're coming—they're coming—perhaps, Meejor, it's better you shouldn't be seen here.

BUTTERFIELD. Whatever you suggest is a command to me. But, may I see you soon—to-morrow?

MRS. O'BRIEN. That is so soon—well, yes—to-morrow.

BUTTERFIELD. A thousand, thousand thanks.

HE *kisses her hand and exits.* MOIRA *re-entering passes him with disdainful look.*

MOIRA. Mother, mother, the procession's back. They're coming up the stairs. Has that horrible creature, Butterfield, gone for good? Mother, I hope you didn't promise anything that would injure dad's pledge to the people?

MRS. O'BRIEN. My dear, Moira, you are very young and enthusiastic. But you will allow me to conduct the more serious matters. You are too inexperienced to meddle in State affairs.



MOIRA (*startled*). State affairs? Oh, mother!

*Noise of people without. Music nearer. Enter KELLY hurriedly. He is dressed in frock coat and tall hat which he takes off as he enters.*

KELLY (*calling back*). This way, my Lord Mayor, this way. Pardon, ladies. His lordship has returned. We have had a most triumphant progress. The enthusiasm of the people was unbounded. It was most remarkable. They want him now. They want to hear him speak from the window. More brain work for your obedient servant.

MOIRA. How, Mr. Kelly? What brain work?

KELLY. State secrets, Miss O'Brien.

MOIRA. State secrets!

KELLY. Gaffney's the thinker—your father's the—the—the Lord Mayor, and I'm the gramophone. (*Calling off.*) This way, my Lord Mayor.

*Enter the LORD MAYOR in robes, with GAFFNEY, who holds his arm.*

MR. O'BRIEN (*sinking exhausted into chair*). Glory be to the first of August, I'm done; I'm bet.

GAFFNEY. Steady, your lordship. One more effort to crown this day's achievements.

*Shouts of "Lord Mayor," "Speech," without.*

KELLY. They are calling for the Lord Mayor.

GAFFNEY. Your lordship had better stand at the window and say a few words.

MR. O'BRIEN. The devil a word. I'm bet, I tell you. I don't know where I am at all, at all. What cud I say to them, except tell them to go to hell and not be botherin' me?

GAFFNEY. But that won't do. You must please them. Remember, we want to increase the salary. Kelly will stand near you and tell you what to say.

MR. O'BRIEN. All right. God help me, I suppose I must if you say so. (*He goes to the window. Great cheers.* KELLY stands near, but converses with MOIRA.

*The others stand about.* Fella citizens. (*Cheers without.*)  
Fella citizens. (*Cheers.*) I say, fella citizens. (*To KELLY.*)  
What comes after "fella citizens?"

KELLY (*prompting*). I thank you from the bottom of my heart—

MR. O'BRIEN. I thank you from the bottom of my heart for the kind reception you have given me this day. (*Cheers. Voice, "You deserve it."*) For the kind way in which you kem out to look at me this day. . . . (*Cheers*) This —

KELLY (*prompting*). The proudest and most glorious day of my career.

MR. O'BRIEN. The proudest and most glorious day of my career. What with the clothes I'm wearin', the drive round the city, and all the rest of it, I'm bet; that's what I am, fella citizens, I'm bet, and now I thank — (*Cheers.*)

GAFFNEY. Go on, go on, Kelly.

KELLY (*prompting*). I repeat to-day what I have already said in the City Hall.

MR. O'BRIEN. But before I leave you, my friends, I repeat to-day what I have already stated in the City Hall — (*Cheers.*)

VOICE. Good old Jimmy!

KELLY *becoming absorbed in conversation with MOIRA neglects the LORD MAYOR who, after some confused thinking, starts off with the Luncheon Speech.*

MR. O'BRIEN. Before I leave you now, fella citizeres, I lift my glass to the glorious antecedents of this noble house—I drink to the memory of my great predecessors who upheld the flag — (*Cheers.*)

MOIRA. The luncheon speech! The luncheon speech! Oh, Mr. Gaffney!

GAFFNEY (*furiously*). Kelly, ring him off.

KELLY (*hastily prompting*). In short, I thank you once more from the bottom of my heart —. (*Cheers.*)

MR. O'BRIEN. In short, I thank you once more from the bottom of my heart — (*Cheers.* VOICE, "Sure we know that.")

KELLY. And your kindness —.

MR. O'BRIEN. And your kindness will follow me like the sunburst of Old Ireland —.

KELLY. — to my dying day. Thank God, it's over.

MR. O'BRIEN. — to my dying day and thank God it's over. (*GAFFNEY pulls him back from the window. Great cheers and crowd goes off singing "A Nation Once Again."*)

GAFFNEY (*to KELLY*). You made a hash of that.

KELLY (*apologetically*). I'm very sorry, sir, I'm not quite up to form.

*ALL exeunt except MOIRA and KELLY. He is about to go when MOIRA calls him back.*

MOIRA. Mr. Kelly. . . . You do write beautiful speeches, but tell me, do you really feel all those splendid things you write?

KELLY. Well—h'm—of course I'm Irish. But what good has it done me? What good will being Irish ever do me?

MOIRA. But, it's splendid to be Irish. Are you not proud of it?

KELLY. Well—I suppose I am.

MOIRA. You are not enthusiastic.

KELLY. Why should I be? It wasn't my doing that I was born Irish.

MOIRA. But you must be proud of your country. You want it to be a great country. Your speeches—the speeches you write for dad and Mr. Gaffney are full of patriotism.

KELLY. Miss O'Brien, I'm not going to sail under false colours with you.

MOIRA. What do you mean?

KELLY. Just this. I'm not full of hatred for England. I'm full of hatred for Gaffney.

MOIRA. Oh!

KELLY (*warmly*). England has done me no harm. England doesn't sweat me. England hasn't kept me on starvation wages. Gaffney has. England doesn't hang all round my life and choke down my soul like a nightmare. Gaffney does. What's the good of being patriotic if it doesn't raise my wages?

MOIRA. Oh, but that is sordid.

KELLY. Sordid? I've got to live. Gaffney just gives me enough to live on and no more. England doesn't treat me like a slave. Gaffney does. I'm his slave, whom he has lent to your father.

MOIRA. Why don't you leave Mr. Gaffney?

KELLY. What's the use? I'm no good for anything but scrivenery. It's about the hardest work a man can be at, and the worst paid. I wouldn't get any better anywhere else. They're all the same—all Gaffneys.

MOIRA. If Ireland was free and a Republic you'd be better off.

KELLY. Not a bit. I'd be just the same. There would be a change of government officials, but that wouldn't change me.

MOIRA. Then how is it you can write all these beautiful sentiments about tyranny and freedom and all that?

KELLY. Because, when I use the word "England," I really mean "Gaffney." When I speak of "Ireland," I mean myself. Just listen. (*Draws MS. from pocket.*) Here's a speech for your father after supper. (*Reads.*) "Fellow citizens, England, the rich and prosperous England, grinds the face of Ireland. England is the greatest bully and tyrant that walks the earth. It is the unfortunate destiny of Ireland to be in the power and grip of that accursed despot." And so on. Now here is the original of that speech. (*Reads from another MS.*)

— Fellow citizens, Gaffney, the rich and prosperous Gaffney, grinds the face of Kelly. Gaffney is the greatest bully and tyrant that walks the earth. It is the unfortunate destiny of Kelly to be in the power and grasp of that accursed despot — ” You see ?

MOIRA. I begin to understand. You bring your own personal feelings into it—your own wrongs ?

KELLY. Certainly. I couldn't compose those burning speeches if I didn't. There are plenty of Gaffneys in Ireland, plenty in England. The world is all the same. Everywhere rich and poor.

MOIRA. I thought you were happy. You seemed so.

KELLY. That's the only benefit I get from being Irish. I make the best of the worst. It's hard sometimes for a chap that has no money or friends.

MOIRA. No friends ?

KELLY. Any amount of acquaintances ; decent fellows.

MOIRA. But you have women friends ?

KELLY. No.

MOIRA. Not one ? Not even one who sympathizes with you ?

KELLY. I—I don't think so.

MOIRA. You hesitate. There must be some one woman that—that you are interested in ?

KELLY. There is only one that ever aroused my interest—honour bright.

MOIRA (*coldly*). Oh, there is. Yes, I thought as much.

KELLY. I shall tell you her name if you like.

MOIRA. What use is that ? I would probably not know who she was.

KELLY. I'm sure you know her very well—at least as well as anyone can know themselves ; which is never too well.

MOIRA. Now you puzzle me.

KELLY. The only woman I ever felt interested in is Miss Moira O'Brien. I am impertinent ; excuse me.



MOIRA. There is no impertinence.

KELLY. There is. I am only a solicitor's hack.

MOIRA. And who am I? Mr. Kelly, will you promise me something?

KELLY. I'll promise you anything, and what's more, I'll see that you get it.

MOIRA. Thank you. I want you to work for Ireland. There is something going on here that is brewing mischief. There is an agent from the Castle trying to get father to receive the King.

KELLY. You don't say so; who is he?

MOIRA. Major Butterfield.

KELLY. I've seen that chap hanging about, and I don't like his looks.

MOIRA. He's trying to get round mother, and, if he succeeds, he has won father, unless Mr. Gaffney puts down his foot.

KELLY. Mr. Gaffney will take up his foot quick enough if there's money under it.

MOIRA. Do you mean that Mr. Gaffney would sell his principles?

KELLY. Principles? A man can't sell what he doesn't possess.

MOIRA. Oh, this is terrible. What are we to do? Tell me what to do. You will help me, won't you?

KELLY. Help you? To death certainly, you may count upon if necessary. *(They impulsively clasp hands.)*

*Enter GAFFNEY.*

GAFFNEY *(sternly)*. Kelly!

KELLY. Yes, sir.

GAFFNEY. What are you doing here? Go and attend to the Lord Mayor. You're not paid for idling about here, are you?

KELLY. No, sir.

GAFFNEY. Then, do as I tell you. Off with you.

(*Exit KELLY. To MOIRA.*) I am surprised at you, Miss O'Brien. I am, indeed.

MOIRA. How have I surprised you, Mr. Gaffney?

GAFFNEY. Well, I didn't expect to find you on such familiar terms with that young scamp. It isn't becoming in the daughter of the Lord Mayor.

MOIRA. I thought you were a democrat.

GAFFNEY. So I am; but even democrats must draw a line somewhere.

MOIRA. I'm obliged to you for all you have done for father, but I do not see how that gives you the right to criticise my actions.

GAFFNEY. Yes, it does. Don't make any mistake about that. Your father is nominally the head of the Mansion House, but, as a matter of fact, I am. I got him into the post. I have advanced him money, and I have to steer him straight.

MOIRA. Well, I am sure he is grateful to you. So am I.

GAFFNEY. But I want more than gratitude from you.

MOIRA. I don't know what you mean.

GAFFNEY (*passionately*). I want *you*. Do you think I have gone into all this troublesome business merely because I took a liking to your father? No. Until I saw you he was nothing to me. He was on the verge of bankruptcy. I didn't care if he went over headlong—until I saw you. Then all was changed in the twinkling of an eye, Moira. The moment I saw you something said to me: "Gaffney, if you would be happy, make that girl your wife."

MOIRA. I am very sorry, Mr. Gaffney, but I never intend to marry.

GAFFNEY. But you must marry, Moira. I can't live without you. Besides—(*MRS. MURPHY, with bucket and brush, enters and stands listening. GAFFNEY breaks off as he sees her. To MRS. MURPHY.*) What the—what the blazes brings you here? (*MOIRA makes a swift exit.*)

MRS. MURPHY. Business.

GAFFNEY. Well, get out of this. Go about your business. Go and hang yourself.

MRS. MURPHY. I got me orders to clean the flure after all the dirty boots. Be the same token, there are dirtier things than boots in the Mansion House.

GAFFNEY (*realising MOIRA's departure: fiercely*). By all the gods, I'll have you chucked out of the window.

MRS. MURPHY (*squaring aggressively to him*). Would you? Would you try it on yourself? Just lay a hand on me, I dar you. Great a man as y'are, Mr. Gaffney. Maybe it's a slap in the ugly face you want wud your lovemakin' and sweetheartin'. A nice comeallye of an ould sweetheart you are, moryah. Come on now, I dar you.

GAFFNEY (*backing*). Woman, I give you three seconds to clear out of this—for ever.

MRS. MURPHY (*dodging about him, her fists up*). It's yourself ought to be cleared ow a this, me dasher. D'you mind, now. The Mansion House'll never be clane and dacent till you and the likes o' you are cleared out of it. Come on now, if you dar. Hit the first blow. Come on now.

*As GAFFNEY continues to back towards L., his guard raised, MRS. MOLONEY rushes in and claws the air before him.*

MRS. MOLONEY. Oh, sir, don't hit a poor, defenceless woman. Oh, sir, she has a heart of gold. There's no better hearted woman from this to the Pigeon House Fort. Oh, sir, don't strike the mother of a family that earns her bread be the sweat of her brow.

MRS. MURPHY (*yelling*). Come on now, I dar you. Hit the first blow, if there's half a man in you.

MRS. MOLONEY. Oh, sir, for God's sake don't strike her.  
GAFFNEY *exit R., chased by the women,*

### ACT III.

*Scene.—The Lord Mayor's office. LORD MAYOR and KELLY at table on which are books and papers. LORD MAYOR has been signing documents.*

MR. O'BRIEN (*sitting back*). Is that all now?

KELLY. That's all, my lord, for the present.

MR. O'BRIEN. What else is on to-day?

KELLY. Deputation concerning new public baths and wash-houses. They have been waiting outside for the past half hour.

MR. O'BRIEN. Let them wait. I've waited all my life on other people. Now they can wait on me.

KELLY. At four o'clock you visit the St. Bridget Convent Schools to distribute prizes and address the pupils.

MR. O'BRIEN. Ay, that's the infernal part of it—all this hard work, getting speeches off by heart. But I think I know the speech to the childher since I got you to cut it down. I've got it here all right. (*Takes MS. from pocket and hands it to KELLY.*) Keep your eye plastered on that and see I make no mistake in my lesson.

KELLY (*watching MS.*). Ready—steady—go.

MR. O'BRIEN (*standing up*). "The longer I live the more convinced I am that the great thing in regard to life is the formation of character. What is character? Character is the sum total of all the virtues and all the vices that we absorb in our youth and develop in our maturity. The formation of character, therefore, my dear young friends, on a proper basin —

KELLY (*correcting*). Basis, my lord.

MR. O'BRIEN. Basis, my lord —

KELLY. No, just basis ; nothing else.

MR. O'BRIEN. Very well. Don't be so fond of interruptin'. What does a word matter more or less ? There's nothing in words. Do you think the poor childher know the differ between basis and basin ?

KELLY. No, but the ladies and gentlemen would who will be present.

MR. O'BRIEN. To the divil with them. The Lord Mayor is above ladies and gentlemen. Glue your eyes to that paper now again. Where 'was I ? At the basin ?

KELLY. Basis—a proper basis—

MR. O'BRIEN. On a proper basis, so that in future years I lift my glass to Ireland a nation once again —

KELLY. No, no. Excuse me, my lord. You are mixing up the speech you are to make at the dinner to-morrow night —

MR. O'BRIEN. That's the worst of having to learn a lot of these cursed speeches. I get mixed up. And, after all, what do the childher care about the "formation of character," and all that tommy-rot ?

KELLY. Nothing, my lord. They don't even understand it ; but it is the usual way to address them.

MR. O'BRIEN. Why can't I go to places and say a few words in my own way and be done with it ?

KELLY. Consider the newspapers, my lord. They expect a stereotyped form of speech on every occasion, and would denounce you as a faddist if you expressed your views in your own way.

MR. O'BRIEN. But a Lord Mayor should be above newspapers.

KELLY. He should, my lord, but he never is.

MR. O'BRIEN. Well, hand me over that damned rigmarole about character and I'll look over it by and by. Now, I think I'm done for the present.

KELLY. The deputation my lord.



MR. O'BRIEN. What deputation?

KELLY, About the new public baths and wash-houses.

MR. O'BRIEN. Who are they and what do they want?

KELLY. Well, there is Mr. Scanlan, Mr. Doherty and Mrs. Moran. They have a lot of old tenement houses they want to get rid of, and they expect to sell them to the Corporation at a big profit.

MR. O'BRIEN. Is that the game?

KELLY. Yes, my lord; frequently played.

MR. O'BRIEN. And what do they want me to do?

KELLY. To back up their plans. They'll make it worth your while, so they say.

MR. O'BRIEN. You mean they'll give me a "hand over?"

KELLY. That is what the commonalty term it, your lordship.

MR. O'BRIEN. Well, I'll see them in hell first.

KELLY. As your lordship pleases. They'll probably be there in any case, but I trust your lordship won't meet them.

MR. O'BRIEN. Look here; I'd do a lot to make a bit of money, but I won't do this. Do you know why?

KELLY. Because your lordship is too honest.

MR. O'BRIEN. The devil a bit. But I'll tell you. Scanlan, Doherty and Mrs. Moran were the three devils that did their level best to put me into bankruptcy, d'you mind?

KELLY. That is so, my lord. They had no mercy.

MR. O'BRIEN (*striking the table*). Aye, they had no mercy on me when I was poor and weak. Now I'm strong and independent. They'll find a change in me. Let the deputation enter.

KELLY *goes to door L. and leads in* DEPUTATION—  
SCANLAN, DOHERTY and MRS. MORAN, *who all come in*  
*smirking.*

KELLY (*announcing*). My Lord Mayor, the deputation

concerning the proposed new public baths and wash-houses.

MR. O'BRIEN. Give them chairs, Kelly.

KELLY *hands chairs. The DEPUTATION bow to the LORD MAYOR before sitting down.*

MR. O'BRIEN. Mrs. Moran and gentlemen, I am very glad to meet you and hear what you have to say.

SCANLAN (*rising*). Your lordship, before explaining to your lordship, the object of this deputation, I wish to state how pleased we are to find your lordship in the position in which your lordship is at present. It is a position, my Lord Mayor, which is only yours by right, by reason of your lordship's sterling character; for, as your lordship must know, your lordship's character stands very high in your native city. (*Sits.*)

DOHERTY (*rising*). My Lord Mayor, I desire to ask your permission to say ditto to that eulogium.

MR. O'BRIEN. That what?

DOHERTY. Eulogium—eulogy—address of congratulation. I am not an orator, like my friend, Mr. Scanlan, but what he says I say ditto to, as it saves time.

MRS. MORAN. I can only say the same as these two gentlemen.

MR. O'BRIEN. Say what?

MRS. MORAN. What they have said.

MR. O'BRIEN. That'll do.

SCANLAN (*rising again*). My Lord Mayor, the object of this rather informal deputation—which is, I hope, the prelude to a still larger one, later on—the object is, to bring before your lordship's notice the crying necessity of public baths and wash-houses in the congested areas of the city.

MR. O'BRIEN. Do the people want baths and wash-houses? Have they asked for them? Do they want to wash?

SCANLAN. They have not so expressed themselves.

MR. O'BRIEN. Then what do you want? Do you want to coerce them? Isn't it a free country? If people don't want to wash themselves, are you going to force them? You mention "character." The longer I live the more convinced I am, that the great thing in regard to life is the formation of character. What is character? Character is the sum total of all the basins that we accumulate —

KELLY (*hastily*). Excuse me, my Lord Mayor, Mr. Scanlan was talking of "baths," not "basins."

SCANLAN. I would just as soon listen to his lordship's lecture on character if it's all the same to him. But, my Lord Mayor, if you will excuse me coming to the point at issue—if the dwellers in the slums do not look on washing with any enthusiasm, that attitude, I submit, is due mainly to want of opportunity. Now, your lordship, as the civic head of this great city, must know that it is men like yourself, and myself, and Mr. O'Doherty, here, and Mrs. Moran —

MR. O'BRIEN. She isn't a man.

SCANLAN. Well, perhaps if I said "person."

KELLY. Lady.

SCANLAN. Yes, lady—where was I?

MR. O'BRIEN. I don't know where you are, but I know where I have to be in an hour's time. I've had enough palaver. I suppose there are tenement houses to be knocked down for these baths?

SCANLAN. That's what I'm coming to.

MR. O'BRIEN. Who owns them?

SCANLAN. Well, I want to make a statement—my Lord Mayor, you won't be at any loss in this matter if we gain your support. We don't expect to get it for nothing —

DOHERTY. Certainly not.

MR. O'BRIEN. You have not answered my question. Who owns the tenements?

SCANLAN. This is purely a philanthropic scheme. For the benefit of our poorer fellow citizens. We want to raise them.

MR. O'BRIEN. I think it's their rents you want to raise. I suppose you own these houses?

SCANLAN. Some, my Lord Mayor.

MR. O'BRIEN. And Doherty some?

DOHERTY. That is so, my Lord Mayor.

MR. O'BRIEN. And Mrs. Moran some?

MRS. MORAN. Only two, my Lord Mayor.

MR. O'BRIEN. Then, to the devil with your philanthropic scheme. I'm not going to help you to sell out your rotten holdings at the expense of the tax-payers. Take that as flat.

SCANLAN. O'Brien, are you mad?

MR. O'BRIEN. No, Scanlan, I'm not mad. I remember the way you tried to force me into the Bankruptcy Court—you and Mr. Doherty, and that lady there. My turn's come now. It's time to wipe out the slums and the slum landlords, too. The three of you may go to hell.

*THEY rise indignantly.*

SCANLAN. Jimmy O'Brien, you won't be Lord Mayor long if I can prevent it, and I'll soon see you again—with the help of God—going about with a patch on your breeches.

MR. O'BRIEN. You lie. Where did you see me with a patch on my breeches?

SCANLAN. I won't mention where—there's a lady present.

MRS. MORAN. Oh, don't mind me, Mr. Scanlan—I like plain talk.

MR. O'BRIEN. Where had I a patch on my breeches?

SCANLAN. On the back part, with Mrs. Moran's permission.

MR. O'BRIEN. I'm a better man than ever you were, patch or no patch.

SCANLAN. You're only a thraneen, a gumdoosh, a clockwork man. You can only go when Gaffney winds you up. Please God, you'll soon be back again amongst your ould broken pots and second-hand kettles up in Liverpool Street.

(*Enter MRS. O'BRIEN.*)

MRS. O'BRIEN. What is all this?

MRS. MORAN. Oh, the Lady Mayoress! The Lord preserve us! The aristocracy has arrived!

MRS. O'BRIEN. My Lord Mayor, how can you allow this vulgar creature to enter the Mansion House?

MRS. MORAN. Because he couldn't prevent me, nor you either.

MRS. O'BRIEN. Mr. Kelly, send for the police.

MRS. MORAN. I'd like to see him. Police, indeed. Please God, I'll live to see you in jail yet.

KELLY. Ladies and gentlemen, the Lord Mayor has some important public engagements. Are you ready, my Lord Mayor?

MR. O'BRIEN. Aye, am I. I have spoken my mind. They'll palm off no rotten tenements on me. Public baths, moryah!

*Exeunt LORD MAYOR and KELLY with papers.*

SCANLAN. Now, Doherty, now, Mrs. Moran —

MRS. MORAN. "Send for the police!" Did you ever hear the like? Put a beggar on horseback. And it only the other day she was behind the counter on five shillings a week.

SCANLAN. Oh, come, Mrs. Moran, come.

*Exeunt DEPUTATION L., enter BUTTERFIELD R.,  
carrying jewel case.*

BUTTERFIELD. The Lady Mayoress! I am fortunate.

MRS. O'BRIEN. Oh, Meejor, I am so glad to see you. There have been such vulgar creatures here. It is a relief to see you.

BUTTERFIELD. You flatter me.



MRS. O'BRIEN. What have you got there, Meejor?

BUTTERFIELD. A trifling present for your ladyship, which I beg your ladyship to accept.

*Enter MR. O'BRIEN, R., absorbed in reading MS., speech, which—unconscious of the others—he declaims with grandiloquent actions.*

MR. O'BRIEN. Fella citizens, England, the rich and prosperous England, grinds the face of Kelly—Ireland. What's that? There's a word rubbed out here. Grinds the face of Ireland. Grinds the face (*memorising*)—the face of Ireland. Damn it, I'm sick of it. (*Declaiming.*) England is the greatest Gaffney and—no, greatest bully and tyrant that walks on Kelly—How the divil—(*examining MS.*)—has Kelly got into all this? (*Examines MS.*)—Have I got houl't of the wrong speech or what's wrong with me at all, at all. (*Puts hand to forehead.*)

BUTTERFIELD. Pardon me, Lord Mayor. You seem to have a nerve-racking task there.

MR. O'BRIEN. Aye, what? Who? Oh, there you are. Well, and how are you?

BUTTERFIELD (*impressively*). My Lord Mayor, I want to have a serious talk with you.

MR. O'BRIEN. If it's about what my wife was telling me, I'm afraid it's no use. I gev my word and I can't go back on it.

BUTTERFIELD. That shows an admirable spirit and I congratulate you. But, let me see. What did you give your word for?

MR. O'BRIEN. That I wouldn't receive the King.

BUTTERFIELD. To whom was this promise given?

MR. O'BRIEN. It was given in the City Hall and from the windows of this Mansion House to the people and the Press. It's gone out to the whole world and there I leave you —

BUTTERFIELD. But, my Lord Mayor, pardon me, what exactly would happen if you received the King?

MR. O'BRIEN. I'd be hounded down by the Press. They'd wreck the Mansion House.

BUTTERFIELD. One moment. They'd wreck the Mansion House? Well, that's not your property. Tell me, candidly, as man to man, when your term is over how much will you be worth?

MR. O'BRIEN. I suppose if I clear a couple of hundred after all my debts are paid, it's the very outside.

BUTTERFIELD (*laughing*). A couple of hundred! And obscurity for the rest of your life? Just plain Mr. O'Brien?

MR. O'BRIEN. I suppose that'll be the end of it. But, glory be to God, it's a great thing to be out of debt.

BUTTERFIELD. And that's all you gain by making a ridiculous promise to the people who will probably change their mind before your term of office is over. Who are the people? Listen. The King is above the people—above politics. Now, then, suppose you tell the rabble to go and hang themselves, as every man has a right to do—what happens? You become Sir James O'Brien, Baronet, and you are made—say an Insurance Commissioner with a substantial salary. Think of that, my Lord Mayor, think of that. Come, be a man. Don't be led like a child. Be a man of the world.

MR. O'BRIEN. I admit there's a terrible lot in what you say. But, there's Gaffney —

BUTTERFIELD. What do you care for Gaffney? What can he do to you?

MR. O'BRIEN. I don't know what he couldn't do. You've no idea of the power of that man. Everybody's afraid of him.

BUTTERFIELD. I'm not. Where is he? Send for him.

MRS. O'BRIEN. I know where to find him, and I'll bring him to you, Meejor. (*Exit L.*)

MR. O'BRIEN. Then, there's my daughter Moira.

BUTTERFIELD. Oho, another obstacle. Pardon me

smiling, my Lord Mayor. But, really—your daughter? Now, I can understand your being afraid of Gaffney, though I don't admire you for it; but your own daughter. My Lord Mayor, you're not serious. Come now.

MR. O'BRIEN. I was never more serious in my life. You don't know Moira.

BUTTERFIELD. I have seen her—a slim, pretty girl—little more than a schoolgirl.

MR. O'BRIEN. Why there's not a bigger Fenian in the length and breath of Ireland than Moira O'Brien.

BUTTERFIELD. Poor child. An enthusiast.

MR. O'BRIEN. Oh, she may be child enough in years but she's a clever girl, Moira is.

BUTTERFIELD. Well, has she such a terrible temper that she could prevent you changing your mind?

MR. O'BRIEN. Temper? She's the sweetest girl in the city, and that's saying a good deal. Temper? Lord bless you, no. But it ud break her heart—it ud break her heart.

BUTTERFIELD. Sentiment, mere sentiment. See here, O'Brien, I'll be straight with you. You're a man of common-sense, and I put it to you, which will benefit your daughter most—your becoming a baronet and a comparatively rich man, or living for the rest of your life in poverty?

MR. O'BRIEN. That's right enough—If she would stay with us.

BUTTERFIELD. Stay with you? Why should she leave you?

MR. O'BRIEN. Once I declare that I'll receive the King, Moira will never stay an hour under the same roof with me. That's certain.

BUTTERFIELD. Nonsense, nonsense. The whims of a child. She would soon come to her senses. Besides, in any case, she won't be much longer with you—a nice girl like that,

MR. O'BRIEN. I never knew her to go in for sweet-hearts or that sort of thing. All her thought is for Ireland, and she believes in me.

BUTTERFIELD. She has not yet met the man who is good enough for her. That's all. She will, in time. Come, my Lord Mayor, don't throw away this golden chance—the chance of a lifetime. You'd repent it for ever.

*Enter GAFFNEY and MRS. O'BRIEN.*

MR. O'BRIEN (*to GAFFNEY*). This gentleman has made an offer if I receive the King.

GAFFNEY. Yes. I have had a conversation with the Lady Mayoress. I understand Major Butterfield's mission.

MR. O'BRIEN. I told him that you had made up your mind on the subject.

GAFFNEY. Quite right. You *will* receive the King, O'Brien. I've changed my mind.

MR. O'BRIEN. But what about mine?

GAFFNEY. I never knew you had one.

MR. O'BRIEN. Well, if I haven't a mind, at all events, I have a conscience.

GAFFNEY. Then, you're not fit for public life. Anyhow, you've got to obey orders.

MR. O'BRIEN. Am I to have no say in the matter?

GAFFNEY. Certainly not. What do you want to say?

MR. O'BRIEN. I want to say that I'd like to act straight and fair with my fellow citizens; that, when I make a promise, I'd keep it; that I won't betray my country for the biggest bribe her enemies can offer.

GAFFNEY. But, my dear fellow, you can't introduce these revolutionary ideas into public life. You'd destroy the very foundations of law and order. . . . Sir James O'Brien, Baronet, sounds very well. Doesn't it?

MR. O'BRIEN. It's a bit of an improvement on "Jimmy."

GAFFNEY. And you'll be an Insurance Commissioner on a big salary.

MR. O'BRIEN. Made up out of the hard earned coppers of poor working girls. . . . And, what'll the people say?

GAFFNEY. I'll look after the Press and the Press will look after the people.

MR. O'BRIEN. I think the people are beginning to look after themselves.

GAFFNEY. See here, O'Brien, you'll just do what you're told. Listen to me. I saved you from bankruptcy.

MR. O'BRIEN. You did, right enough.

GAFFNEY. I made you Lord Mayor.

MR. O'BRIEN. Right. You did. I admit it.

GAFFNEY. What reward do you propose to offer me?

MR. O'BRIEN. Give it a name yourself.

GAFFNEY. Moira O'Brien. (*Pause.*)

MR. O'BRIEN. Oh, you want to marry my daughter. Have you asked Moira?

GAFFNEY. I'm asking you.

MR. O'BRIEN. But you don't want to marry *me*. In a matter of this sort it's only common courtesy to consult the chief person concerned. Here she comes. (*Enter MOIRA and KELLY.*) Come over here a moment, Moira.

MOIRA. Yes, father.

MR. O'BRIEN. Moira, this—(*indicating GAFFNEY*)—wants to marry you. What do you say to that?

MOIRA. Oh, father—I don't like to hurt Mr. Gaffney's feelings.

MR. O'BRIEN. Oh, you needn't be afraid of that. You don't want to be Mrs. Gaffney, is that it?

MOIRA. Father, I'd rather be dead.



MR. O'BRIEN (*to GAFFNEY*). That sounds fairly conclusive.

MOIRA. Besides, father, I have promised . . . you see . . . (*indicating KELLY*).

GAFFNEY. See what ?

KELLY. Well, you see, she has promised to marry me and she can't very well marry the both of us, can she ?

GAFFNEY. You insolent young puppy !

MR. O'BRIEN. Order, order. That language isn't in keeping with the dignity of the Mansion House. . . . Moira, they're offering to make me a baronet if I receive the King.

MOIRA. Oh, father, what a dreadful . . . what a horrible idea.

MR. O'BRIEN. But a baronetcy is supposed to be a great honour, isn't it ?

MOIRA. These honours are a sign of a dishonour. They are bought and sold in the market. The only honour worth having is the love of the people. Besides, father, if you become a baronet you would always be unhappy, for I would never speak to you again.

MR. O'BRIEN. Be-damn-but, that's a calamity I'm not prepared to face.

MRS. O'BRIEN. You're a fool, James, a downright fool, to talk like that. To think that you'd countenance Moira throwing herself away like that when she has the chance of making a respectable match.

MR. O'BRIEN. Respectable, is it ? If that's your idea of respectability I'm done with it. Respectability drove me into the Corporation. It was respectability nearly drove me into bankruptcy ; but it won't drive me into making my daughter marry a dirty wire-puller like that. No more respectability for me.

GAFFNEY. O'Brien, I raised you up and I can pull you down.

MR. O'BRIEN. Well, you can't pull me down anyhow

for twelve months. And when you tell the people that Jimmy O'Brien wouldn't receive the King, even to be made a baronet, we'll see who'll be in the mud. Do you see, now? And, you know your way out. There's the door.

GAFFNEY. You dare to order me out of the Mansion House?

*Enter Charwomen.*

MR. O'BRIEN. I do, and what's more, I'll see my orders carried out.

MOIRA (pointing to BUTTERFIELD). Yes, and throw out that English reptile too.

GAFFNEY. O'Brien, you're mad.

MRS. MURPHY. Oh, the devil a mad he is, my hearty. Give us a speech, Jimmy.

GAFFNEY. He'd better get Kelly to write it first. This is an outrage.

MR. O'BRIEN. I don't see any outrage. Kelly's a decent young fellow. I've nothing against him . . . so far. He'll marry my daughter, right enough, and he'll be my secretary. But, for the future, I'll make my own speeches in my own way. I'll neither be run by clique or Castle. I'll be the independent champion of the people's rights. I'll be the citizens' Lord Mayor.

CURTAIN.















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